Jeffrey Frank, Outlook
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Dear Jeff,

My apologies for not asnwering the question one of you had asked me about the massive disclosure of records and for not finishing the explanation I'd begun about the professionals like doctors being too limited in their knowlddge of the available fact.

I was somewhat disconcerted. When we left the restaurant my left big toe, which had had some work done on it that morning by the podiatrist, was hurting. When you left we looked at it and found the support I wear rather bloody. We returned to the podiatrist, he did more uncomfortable work on it, and told me to keep it moist for the rest of the day while keeping it elevated. It was still uncomfortable when I got up, so I wasn't really focused on the correction and insertion of which I mailed you a copy when I left for my early-morning walking. I had to cut it short. But while walking I did recall that when I suggested that we go look at the volume of records in the basement it was part of my answer to the question one of you had asked about the recent records disclosures.

Of course I am all for all the disclosure possible. But that does not mean it was done well and it does not mean that I expect much to come of it. Save for the rare few like John Newman, I do not. And I do not like the way it was done even though it would not have been done any other way after all these years.

The reason I wanted you both to see the volume in our cellar is for you to get a notion of the grim fact that massive disclosures are themselves a means of denying meaningful access. Almost nobody can begin to think of getting them. The volume and the cost preclude that. And who can go over all those pages and do anything else, and how long does that take? Three times what you saw.

~~Even~~ For those who have the means and live in apartments, there is no place for all ~~that~~ those records. How many can afford to go to Washington, now College Park, and live there for what would be years to be able to review all that paper? And could he make more than notes? If he got copies, where would he keep them away from home?

The shift of agency records to the Archives means as I understand it a multiplication of costs per copy of 2 1/2 times. The million pages reported would cost a quarter or a millions dollars. Holding them would require at least 100 file cabinets. Aside from that not inconsierable added cost, who can find space for them? Or afford to rent it?

Disclosures of that volume become media events. For the major media it has a short life. Soon it is no longer a story. But the deceptive and misleading impression is given that the government is being forthcoming. Then there is the impression that there really is nothing in all those records. Otherwise the media would report it.

I tried to dramatize this in my C.A.77-2155, as I now recall the case. I finally was able to persuade Jim Lesar to file for a temporary restraining order, to delay the second

of the so-called general releases of December 1977 and January 9, 1978, by the FBI. I thus was able to state a completely legitimate man-bites dog event, the one who had been in the lead of demanding disclosures and using FOIA to force them also demanding Jenning non-disclosure. The additional point I made was that disclosures of such a volume, that second part being of about 45,000 pages, was a media event. I told the Judge Gesell the truth, and he believed it, that the media could not begin to make sense out of what was strange to them and that I should have a set so that I could respond to inquiries. He refused the TRO, which neither Jim nor I expected to get, but he did ordered fastest possible delivery of a complete set to me. I had them two days later, too. He also gave me the fee waiver I'd requested.

Lardner was the only reporter present that day. I'd thought the switch, my asking for a TRO, would attract more reportorial interest.

On these new releases I have only the very pages pages sent me. As I told you, almost none of what I've looked at is new. This was medical stuff I'd been sent. Oscar tells me that many of the records of different content included in these releases also are not new.

Other factors are, rather include the nature of the records. It is important never to forget that the intent was not to investigate the crime itself. As I think I told you, that also was true in the King case. With some records a certain amount of extertise is required, to know what the records should include. An illustration that comes to mind illustrates the problem where there is what I believe was full disclosure yet there was what seemed to be missing records. The illustration that came to mind has to do with scientific testing. I got more than 1,000 pages of such records in my King assassination suit, 75-1996. But although a large number of rifles that had no possible connection with the crime were tested in various ways, on what the FBI referred to as the "death" rifle, which I'm sure was not that at all, the most basic, simplests and as I just happened to know - as say most historians would not know - usually one of the first tests is a "swab" test. It is simple and it requires no instruments, not even training. A cloth patch is pushed or pulled through the barrel to see if any oil residue is there. The test is to determine whether the rilde was fired after it was last cleaned. If there is an oil residue, it was not fired.

Now the FBI had done that with the first rilde Ray bought and returned, even though it knew without question that that rilfe could not be fired because of an encrustation of protective cosmoline with which it is coated before being shipped from the factory. That records was given to me. But none for that test on the rifle the FBI claims fired the fatal shot. I was assured by the FBI that I'd been given all. I appealed. It interested Quin Shea, then the appeals officer. His inquiry assured him that no such test was made on it. In form he said his check showed no such record. He told me that and when the government used him as an expert witness, he testified to it. Without a

reporter in the courtroom to report it. (There is almost never any reporter at the FOIA hearings.)

Tracing something like this takes an extraordinary amount of time and effort. If the requester or searcher knows it should exist. And with this new mechanism I know of no way for the matter to be resolved, as Shea did that one for me. He did not have the time to do most of them.

So, some detailed, painstaking searches can be inconclusive, more so now.

There are many areas of media indifference. For example, those CIA records in which form what he told me John Newman did such fine work. I do not know of a single instance of the raising of what to me is an obvious question: if all those records could be disclosed safely 30 years later, why could they not have been disclosed earlier? It does happen that I had requested them of the CIA and was not in a position to file and pursue that lawsuit because the CIA is more adept at and successful with stonewalling.

There is no legitimate reason for earlier non-disclosure. Not under the law. But what is the effect today? It becomes even more difficult, if not impossible, to go through all the records of the current volume, whereas if there had been an orderly disclosure, people would have explored lesser volumes of pages.

I do not want to take your time or mine for more, unless I leave this not as clear as you'd like it to be.

The bottom line is that nobody will ever go over all of them and nobody will have the knowledge required to detect what is cleverly obscured with the use of words for that purpose. It becomes a means of perpetuating improper withholding under the color of full disclosure. Which I'm sure the CIA and FBI will never makes.

What I'd started to explain about those who without question have the proper credentials relates mostly to the medical evidence. (see p.5)

I know of no one who has done the work required for a proper search or analysis of what is examined. This is particularly true of the medical evidence. Currently there are two radiologists with impeccable credentials who have raised questions about the ~~autopsy~~ authopsy X-rays. I've been in touch with both, rather they, after a while, each got in touch with me. One, who seems also to be a fine fellow, a Dr. Mantik, is sure he detected some alteration of an X-ray of the back of JFK's head. He was permitted to use a densometer and from that he concluded that the density he spotted at what he says is the most important point meants that something was done to obscure what that part of that X-ray should show, that the back of JFK's head was blown out. He makes a very persuasive case.

But he has ~~never~~ never studied that part of the Zapruder film, rather the relevant part. There were some shenanigans that I exposed in my second book: the Commission did not publish all the stills, the frames, it should have. The FBI contrived that by not making black-and-white prints for the printing office. So, instead of publishing through

Frame 343 they published only through Frame 334. I did the simple arithmetic nobody had done, based on the number that were to have been printed. I did embarrass the Archives. They added the nine missing frames to the tray of slides they projected and I examined them, enlarged from about 1/4" to about 4 feet. What was published does not show the back of the head. Those frames do. There isn't the slightest indication of a wound there. No blood anywhere on the head, there, the hair, the short collar. Every hair seems to be in place. And because those slides were made from the original, by LIFE, with copies not in LIFE's possession, there is no possibility of any trickery. Particularly, the government did not have the original to toy with.

The pictures are clear: the back of the head was not blown out and all the hair even seems to be in place. After the fatal shot, which was to the head.

Mantik, of California, and Robertson, of Nashville, both seeming to be fine men, have not made any real study of the Zapruder film. I've suggested it and told each what to look for. I have color enlargements from a VCR but they do not take much enlargement before a pattern of rectangles makes any added enlargement a waste. I had a second generation point. That is, it was made from a copy that was made from the original. But I gave it and most of my pictures to Woodward so students can use them.

(When Groden said he would make individual slides for me I sued the Zapruder estate and got the right, for scholarship only, and then Groden backed out. I can't pay the Archives their charges x 300+ for it all

I am also saying that none of the so-called researchers, with Newman a probable exception, tries to be his own devil's advocate.

Most of the so-called researchers begins with a preconceived solution and their searches are for proof of their correctness.

Then there is the insensitivity that develops from long, continuous examination of such records. It happens to all of us, me included.

If you are here again, either or both, remind me to show you some other records from that blue file folder from which I retrieved the K. holograph to copy for you. I'll show you, and give you a copy if you'd like, of what I regard as one of the most very shocking official records ever generated. Two very bright and very good and very well informed lawyers, both genuine subject experts, missed it. The sent me some copies and I was stunned when I first saw it. I think of it and refer to it as an FBI damage-control tickler. Among its other disclosures, never used, is that the FBI created "dossiers" on the Commission Members as soon as they were appointed, did that on the staff, too, and when the report was out, did the staff dossiers all over again. (But in its Clarence Thomas investigation it did not even talk to those from whom he rented movies.) The dossiers on the critics are described as "sex dossiers." It says that Hoover blocked Warren's appointment of of his chief counsel and that Hoover had an "adversary" relationship with the Commission. That the FBI and Angleton got together to decide how they would

answer questions. I think it was Sullivan for the FBI. It says that FBIHQ knew about that Oswald note that was a threat left at the FBI and "handled" it as soon as he was killed. That is when Hosty was ordered to destroy it. I think there is an important and still untold story in this.

Story reminds me. If the Washingtonian is interested in what you took back with you, fine. Ditto for the longer story I did on the Hombers' refusal to agree to the single-bullet theory. This could be another.

There can be more after Case Open is out that can include what I regard as sensational photographs that are of the Purloined Letter variety that for some incomprehensible reason, as I indicated, will not be in that book. I hope that at least some will be in NEVER AGAIN! I'll seek an understanding on that before long. These constitute photographic disproof of the official mythology.

I hope I've rambled thorugh to adequate answers.

Harold

Our best,

From p. 3. Then there are those who had the basic information all the new ones, after 30 years, do not have, like Meagher and Roffman, who cannot use these newly-disclosed records with the knowledge they'd bring it to. So many have died. And all the new ones find it almost impossible to get a factual basis for their study. I'll enclose a copy of a letter in today's mail. It is from a man who regards what is available as worthless. Much of my mail is from those not yet born when JFK was killed or those then children. They and those a little older have for all practical purposes no means of acquiring any background with which to begin any study of disclosed records. Other than what will deceive and mislead them, which also can mean misdirect them. Where it might have been a little different, as I indicated to you, a man much respected on the Post, Howard Willens, ended the indexing project begun by the Archives soon after he joined the Commission staff (to save money!) as its #3 man and as liaison with his employer, DJ. I'll add to this after I finish reading and correcting what I wrote earlier. I'd best leave myself a reminder because Lil may soon call me to lunch and then I have the doctor's appointment that, not functioning as I should today, I forgot this morning. When I first got access to CDI I (see p. 6) took xeroxes of the pages of which I use excerpts in Whitewash I, those I added at the end, just before printing it, to Ben Bradlee. He got the point quickly. No, I'd taken him that and some other documents earlier and then I took him a copy of the book. He put Larry Stern and Dan Kurzman on it and they asked me to draw up some questions to be asked of Willens. I sat at a newsroom typewriter and gave them but a single page of them. Kurzman had been given the book to read and was impressed by it. Liked it much. Took me to the cafeteria for coffee and to talk about it. That was the morning after he finished reading it.

I remember now that I first spoke to Al Friendly. Perhaps that was because Mack Mathias

had told me that he had spoen to Friendly when he read the ms. And Friendly took me into Bradlee's part of that office then.

Stern and Kurzman told me when they'd be back and I was there waiting for them. Stern went in to see Bradlee immediately, Kurzman sat and talked to me.

"You are in, kid! He did not have a decent answer to anything!"

I had not asked anything of the Post. I just gave them the book to use. They could have, for example, serialized it free. I just wanted the word out.

Next thing I knew, and it may have been as soon as the next day, Kurzman was no longer on the Post. I heard a rumor it had to do with a story he'd written about the Dominican Republic. The story was given to Dick Harwood, who was then sitting I think where Kurzman had. I'd not seen him before. He seemed indifferent and a bit distant and I recall nothing that he asked me or asked me about. And the next thing I knew there was a story across the top of the front page, above the masthead, in the Memorial Day issue. It was almost entirely about Epstein's Inquest. Which was, I suppose. politically more ceeptable because it praised the FBI and went after Warren in particular. Again, no checking. Epstein's big point was that the autopsy report was rewritten and the re-written one was delivered to the Commission much later, perhaps in January. In fact that was the supplemental report the original said would be filed later.

I suppose political acceptability did not have to be spelled out. The same thing happened on the Times. Fred Graham was then its legal correspondent. I'd given him one of the first copies and saw him from time to time. He complained once that I was coming between him and his wife because the only time they had for reading was in bed and she kept Whitewash from him more often than not. When his review appeared it was all Epstein save for about a sentence in which he faulted me for being painstaking and overhwelming.

And Whitewash was out about two months before Epstein's pub date, the end of June. From 5: CDI is the first of the five volumes of the special report LBJ ordered the FBI to make the night of the assassination. I have it. You should see it! The last is on Ruby and the other volumes are of exhibits. It is a political diatribe against Oswald and does not even bother to report all the shooting.